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Independent Labour Party (Great Britain)

Annual report, 1921-22

[London]

[1922]

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INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY
INFORMATION COMMITTEE.

5, York Bldgs,
Adelphi,
London, W.C.2.

308
Z
Box 815

Executive Committee.

Representing the N.A.C.
R. C. Wallhead, Chairman.
Mrs. M. A. Hamilton.
R. C. Lambert.
Major C. R. Attlee, M.A.
J. Ramsay Macdonald

Representing the Members.
F. Seymour Cocks.
Councillor G. Burgneay.
Reginald Stamp.
William Haywood, Treasurer.
Ernest E. Hunter, Secretary.

The ANNUAL MEETING of the I.L.P. INFORMATION COMMITTEE will be held on SATURDAY, April 15th, 1922, 6.15 p.m., at the CIRCUS STREET HALL, NOTTINGHAM, to consider the ANNUAL REPORT and FINANCIAL STATEMENT and to appoint Officers and Committee for 1922-23.

ANNUAL REPORT, 1921-22.

The year 1921-2 has been one of steady growth in the work and usefulness of the Committee; a growth reflected in increased affiliations and subscriptions to the Weekly Notes. New lines of work, such as the Study Circles, have been thrown out with success during the year, and your Committee is able to present a report showing substantial progress.

The Executive Committee has met on six occasions during 1921-22, and the Parliamentary Sub-Committee at frequent intervals. The Current Records Sub-Committee (J. Ramsay McDonald, Mrs. M. A. Hamilton, Reginald Stamp, R. Seymour Cocks and the Secretary) which supervises the Weekly Notes has met practically every week.

Mr. Pethick Lawrence only accepted the position of Treasurer at a time of difficulty, and that having been surmounted, he resigned in July, 1921. The Committee desires to put on record its very grateful thanks. Unfortunately, Mr. William Haywood who succeeded him is compelled by consistent ill-health to retire at the Annual Meeting. We sincerely hope that he will soon be completely recovered.

The resignation of Mr. Emile Burns who had acted as Secretary from the formation of the Committee to March 31st, 1921, was to quote the minute placed on record accepted with the greatest regret, "as the Committee regards his work during the last two years of the highest value to the Party." Mr. Ernest E. Hunter was appointed in his stead.

Membership

Last year the number of subscribing members was 461. It is now 500. Last year there were 120 affiliated Branches. This year there are 244, more than double the number. Increased affiliations include a number of Head Office Organisations who now supply the Weekly Notes to their Speakers and Candidates. Among them are the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, Railway Clerks' Association, Women's Co-operative Guild, Co-operative Party, Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, etc.

Finance

An audited statement will be found at the end of this Report. The expenditure for the year has been £1,263 3s. 10d., the greater amount of which has been raised by the Committee from subscriptions, donations, fees for work done and publications. The N.A.C. has made total grants of £300 during the period under review.

Subscriptions, fees and donations have increased from £629 16s. 2d. in 1920-21 to £713 9s. 2d. in 1921-22. This is largely due to the increased affiliations and small subscriptions which show the growing appreciation throughout the Labour Movement of the Committee's work. In view of the fact that the Committee has this year been without two large donations appearing in last year's accounts the result is especially gratifying.

To clear off outstanding liabilities however at least £100 must be raised. An earnest appeal is made to those who can afford to render increased financial assistance in order that we may not be burdened during the new financial year with old commitments.

Weekly Notes for Speakers

These Notes have now reached No. 155, and continue to be the most appreciated portion of the Committee's work. The circulation is 1417 as compared with 1145 in March, 1921, a weekly increase of 272 copies. The minimum annual subscription is 10s. This entitles the subscriber to receive one copy of the Notes weekly, and any specific information he or she requires from time to time. Quantities are supplied on the following terms :- 15s. for three copies and an additional 2s. 6d. per annum for each extra copy of the Notes supplied weekly. A number of subscribers have rendered valuable service by recommending the Notes to their friends. We shall always be glad to receive names and addresses of possible new subscribers, to whom specimens and particulars might be sent

Expectations of an early General Election led the Committee to announce that in such an event it would issue Daily Notes for Speakers on the lines of those issued weekly. A number of preliminary orders have been placed, but there must be considerably more if this is to be a profitable undertaking.

Publications—Study Circles

During the year the Committee was responsible for the initiation of a very considerable I.L.P. educational effort, and much time and thought was given to the preparation of suitable syllabuses, and to providing the Branches with memoranda as to the most effective way to organise Study Circles. In pursuance of this policy the Commlttee published the following syllabuses :—

(1) 'The History of the I.L.P." J. Ramsay MacDonald. (6d.)
(2) "The Principles of Socialism." Mary Agnes Hamilton." (6d.)
(3) 'Socialism at Work." Ernest E. Hunter. (6d.)

for which there has been such a ready sale that the stocks are now almost exhausted.

The publication of these syllabuses stimulated I.L.P. educational work in every part of the country, and although the Committee is not in possession of exact figures there is no doubt that many Study Circles and Groups resulted. In London alone 23 such classes were formed.

Your Committee contemplates developing this work, and has two further syllabuses in hand, i.e., "Socialism and Foreign Affairs." E. D. Morel and H. B. Lees-Smith (in MSS.), and " Industrial History." Major C. R. Attlee, M.A.

Other Publications

There has been a steady and continuous demand for " The Capitalist Press " and " Who Pays for the Attacks on Labour ; " the first of which is now out of stock after having run through editions totalling to 35,000.

Parliamentary Work

The meetings between the members of the I.L.P. Parliamentary Group and the Committee have been continued at fairly regular intervals, and although for a short time they were in abeyance, they are now again being held weekly, with very fruitful results. During the last few weeks there has been a distinct improvement in attendance, and the meetings are serving a most useful purpose in knitting together members of the I.L.P. in the House of Commons. As often as possible we secure that an experienced ex-Parliamentarian should be present to advise on questions of policy and procedure.

The Committee suffered a severe loss when Miss Phœbe Wedgwood, who was giving full time voluntary service, left to take up other duties. Miss Wedgwood was responsible for the drafting of questions and general assistance to the I.L.P. Parliamentary Group and the Committee owes her a debt of gratitude for her valuable assistance.

Voting Records

The fact that the Committee can supply the Voting Records of M.P.s has been more generally realised during the year, and we have now provided I.L P. Branches and constituency organisations with the records of 73 Members of Parliament. The record to date consists of 14 cards containing 168 divisions in all, and extends over the period 1919-21. The cost is 14s., and a record of any M.P. can be sent by return of post. During the year we have received £38 2s. 2d. under this head as compared with £21 1s. 4d. during the previous year.

General

The department is being increasingly utilised for research work of every description, and despite a limited staff deals with a large number of enquiries week by week. Subscribers are encouraged to consult us as to their difficulties, and although no fixed charges are made, to subscribe as liberally as possible towards the cost of such enquiries.

The Committee feels it has a right to be proud of its year's work. Despite the trade depression and unemployment which has wrecked many other societies, its ordinary revenue has been substantially increased, and the paid circulation of the Weekly Notes has steadily risen. There is indeed ample evidence that the Committee performs a much needed function, and its ever widening circle of influence gives great hope for the future. This success however creates a real difficulty. Every new member helps to spread abroad the uses to which the Information Committee can be put, and the small office staff is apt to be overwhelmed by a tidal wave of correspondence. This difficulty can only be met by raising a considerable sum for development purposes. The I.L.P. Information Committee cannot stand still. It must find ways and means to meet all the legitimate demands of its subscribers. In that way it will continually expand, and each year's report will be a story of successful development.

INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY INFORMATION COMMITTEE, 1921-22.

Receipts and Payments for the Year, March 1st, 1921-22.

RECEIPTS.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
To Balance		51 12 1
,, Subscriptions	213 4 0	
,, Affiliation Fees	170 3 11	
,, Donations	330 1 3	
		713 9 2
,, Fees for Work Done—		
Voting Records	38 2 2	
Other Work	22 2 0	
		60 4 2
,, N.A.C. Grant *		250 0 0
,, Publication Sales		200 1 11½
,, Miscellaneous		1 3 0
		£1,276 10 4½

* N.A.C. An additional £50 was received after Feb. 28th, 1922.

EXPENDITURE.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
By Rent	102 0 0	
Less Receipts	22 11 6	
		79 8 6
,, Office Expenses		57 18 3½
,, Salaries		662 12 5
,, Weekly Notes. Printing and Postage		236 12 11½
,, Printing and Stationery	45 8 1½	
Less Receipts	2 11 0	
		42 17 1½
,, Newspapers and Publications ..		25 9 1
,, Postage and Telephone	72 18 3	
Less Receipts	12 7 6	
		60 10 9
,, Publications (Printing and Advertising)		67 12 10
,, Advertising (General)		4 13 3
,, Rent Deposit (Russell Lectures) ..		3 3 0
,, Miscellaneous		17 5 7½
,, Furniture		5 0 0
		1,263 3 10
Balance, February 28th, 1922—		
At Bank	11 16 10	
Petty Cash	1 9 8½	
		13 6 6½
		£1,276 10 4½

We have examined the receipts and payments comprised in this account, and to the best of our belief and judgment they are correct.

March, 19th, 1922.

F. SEYMOUR COCKS.
MARY AGNES HAMILTON.

21514 28166

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